



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

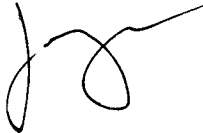
NO. LTC # 246-2007

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LETTER TO COMMISSION
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

TO: Mayor David Dermer and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager 

DATE: November 5, 2007

SUBJECT: Transition of Answer Center

This Letter to Commission is intended to provide you and your staff with information relating to the transition of the Answer Center. As you recall, the Answer Center – as it has traditionally existed – will be transitioned out as part of the budget process for the current fiscal year. Effective November 13, 2007, Answer Center staff will shift to other assignments in the City. However, the 305.604.CITY will remain a central number for residents, businesses and visitors to call to reach City departments for assistance. We will continue to promote the use of the number, but it will no longer be called an Answer Center.

The transition includes the development of a comprehensive (bilingual) voice response message system that will allow callers to be connected with the departments/services that most frequently receive inquiries. These include: sanitation, public works infrastructure issues (e.g. potholes, street lights, water leaks, etc.), building, noise/code violations, occupational license/vendor permits, Parking, Mayor/Commission and Human Resources. Should they not select any of these options, they may choose to speak to an operator. In those cases, the calls will be transferred to the City Clerk's office. While the City Clerk's office may provide information or assistance, they will serve primarily as a point of information for determining which department should receive the call, and will transfer the call to that department, if needed.

Please also be advised that Better Place will continue to be promoted as a vehicle for residents, businesses and visitors to submit service requests and complaints. In fact, with the elimination of the Answer Center concept, we will be more actively urging residents to use Better Place. Our Neighborhood Services Department will continue to monitor response to service requests submitted via Better Place and will provide reports to departments when requests remain open beyond the customary time.

Excellent Customer Service remains a top priority for our city. We are looking at other options to increase customer contact with the City, including the possible use of volunteers to assist the City Clerk staff in answering phone calls. Daily passport applications will also now be processed at the Clerk's office.

As always, please feel free to call me should you have any questions or require additional information.

JMG/hmf